CLASSIFICATION

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ANALYSIS BRANCH

TO : Department of State

INFO : ALGIERS, BENGHAZI, RABAT, TUNIS

FROM : Amembassy TRIPOLI DATE: 4SEP 70

SUBJECT : Visit by S. C. Litzenberger, AID/W, to Discuss Accelerated Wheat Production Program with Libyan Government

REF :

S. C. Litzenberger, formerly with AID Tunis and now with AID/W, consulted with the Libyan Ministry of Agriculture and Agricultural Reform from August 17 to August 28 on how Libya could accelerate its wheat production, using improved varieties from Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maiz y Trigo (CIMMYT). Successful wheat improvement programs have been undertaken in Tunisia and Morocco, and Algeria expects to start a similar program in the near future; it is only natural that Libya, which imports about three-fourths of its wheat consumption requirements, should, sooner or later, join these countries in a coordinated program. Dr. Litzenberger believes that a conservative goal for the Government would be to double its wheat production within five years.

Dr. Litzenberger reviewed Libya's experimental plantings of Mexican wheat, visited several regional agriculture officials in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, and held detailed discussions with officials of the Ministry of Agriculture and Agricultural Reform. His work in Libya and his recommendations are summarized, in two reports he prepared for the Ministry. The first, titled "Proposed Recommendations for Growing 'Mexican' Wheat in Libya," discusses the technical aspects of the problem -- what and where to plant, methods of weed control, recommended fertilizers, etc. The second report, "A Proposed

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Drafted by: ECON:WHDaron:md 8/31/70

Contents and Classification Approved by: ECON:APlacke

Clearances:

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Coordinated Cooperation Program for Accelerated Wheat Production in Libya," contains specific program recommendations, steps to be taken, recommended organizational structures for implementing the program and training recommendations.

There is little doubt in Dr. Litzenberger's mind that Libya could greatly increase its wheat production by using the CIMMYT varieties and drawing on the Tunisian experience. He recommended that the Libyans contact their counterparts in Tunisia, and government officials intend to do so. They hope to buy some seed from Tunis within the next month.

Libya needs to make a commitment to a wheat improvement program and give such a program sufficient priority; the other elements for a successful program are present.

Comment. Dr. Litzenberger has performed an invaluable service for the Libyan Government (LARG). Sooner or later, Libya will decide to move ahead with a wheat improvement program, and when it does Dr. Litzenberger's reports will form the basis for Libya's actions. The LARG is now examining how it should accelerate wheat production; Dr. Litzenberger's trip was very timely. It remains to be seen whether Libya will decide to move into a program this year or whether it will put it off.

The flexibility shown by AID in making Dr. Litzenberger available is greatly appreciated. He filled a need in Libya, and performed a service that the Libyans could not have obtained otherwise. Bureaucrats in the Ministry of Agriculture and Agricultural Reform are grateful. The United States has shown that it can be responsive to Libya's needs, and that it is interested in technical cooperation, even when there is no direct payoff for the US. The Minister of Agriculture and Agricultural Reform said he would report Dr. Litzenberger's consultations to Prime Minister Qadhafi and to Deputy Prime Minister Jallud.

PALMER